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Idaho Water
Resource Board

&



Henry's Fork
Watershed Council

Henry's Fork Basin Study

Meeting Summary: Workgroup Meeting 8

June 24, 2011

Meeting date: June 21, 2011

Summary prepared by: Mark Bransom/CH2M HILL

Introduction

The Henry's Fork Basin Study (Study) summarized herein was conducted as an agenda item during a regular meeting of the Henry's Fork Watershed Council (HFWC). The HFWC has agreed to provide a forum for Stakeholders to participate in the Study. The Council and other interested stakeholders represent the Study Workgroup.

Bob Schattin/Bureau of Reclamation opened the Basin Study discussion with a review of study progress since the April 19 meeting which included several interim meetings with Stakeholders to enhance the needs assessment report relative to agricultural, environmental, and municipal water needs and to brainstorm alternatives. Participants in the interim meetings included members from Fremont Madison Irrigation District (FMID), Henry's Fork Watershed Council (HFWC), Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG), Eastern Idaho Water Rights Coalition, City of Idaho Falls, Trout Unlimited, Friends of the Teton River, and American Rivers.

Mr. Schattin reviewed the meeting agenda and outlined both short-term and long-term study steps which include the following:

Short-term

- Prepare for Idaho Water Resources Board (IWRB) presentation on July 28
 - Develop scope of work for reconnaissance alternatives
 - Continue to refine the Draft Needs Assessment
 - Environmental needs – IDFG is helping with technical assistance
 - Agricultural needs – refine the description and explanation of drought effects
 - Municipal needs – provide a better description of water rights and legal considerations (municipalities hold surface water rights)

Long-term

- Draft Interim Report by October 2011 which includes a technical report for each alternative to be carried forward to reconnaissance evaluation
 - The next HFWC meeting will be held on October 25, 2011 (*post meeting update*)
- Final Interim Report by December 2011 will include recommendations for which alternatives warrant appraisal-level analysis
- Appraisal-level analysis – complete March 2013
- Final Basin Study Report – complete June 2013

Carry Forward Reconnaissance Alternatives

Mark Bransom/CH2M HILL presented Reclamation's early screening process which is based on the U.S. Water Resources Council's 1983 *Principles and Guidelines for Water and Related Land Resources Implementation Studies* (P&Gs). During the early screening process, alternatives were considered based on acceptability, effectiveness, efficiency, and completeness to determine if they warrant further analysis.

Mr. Bransom continued the discussion by presenting the draft list of surface storage, groundwater recharge, and conservation alternatives to be carried forward for reconnaissance evaluation (see Attachment 1).

Workgroup comments on the draft list included the following:

- Would like to see alternatives that yield environmental benefits vs. alternatives that have the fewest environmental effects. Lesa Stark/Reclamation commented that Reclamation would like to get more feedback related to environmental objectives. Mark Bransom/CH2M HILL also clarified that each alternative analysis will be tied back to the Goals and Objectives Matrix (impacts and potential benefits) that was developed with Workgroup input early in the Basin Study.
- Would like to use a portion of Basin Study funding made available as part of WaterSMART program to analyze DCM&I Supply and Conservation and FMID Optimization. Comment was noted, and Reclamation recognizes that although programs currently exist for conservation and optimization practices, some water supply solutions could potentially move faster in other programs.
- Would like to see a water market alternative with implementable market mechanisms vs. solely an economic valuation of water.

WIRE Breakout Groups

Kim Ragotzkie/HFF and Dale Swenson/FMID continued the meeting by initiating the break-out into three Watershed Integrity Review and Evaluation (WIRE) groups: technical, agency, and citizens groups. The three groups met to independently discuss the carried forward alternatives. WIRE group feedback included the following:

Technical

- Generally agreed with the carried forward alternatives
- Can we look at flood control?
- Are there storage options that can benefit the Upper Teton?
- Interested in seeing a detailed discussion of Dr. Van Kirk's model
 - Interest in seeing Dr. Van Kirk's efforts expanded for the Basin Study
- Teton Valley recharge – modify alternative #37
- Alternative notes:
 - Moose Creek is partially on Federal Forest Land
 - Enlarging the Cross Cut Canal is only effective with storage water
 - Pleased to see “economic valuation” being pursued
 - Noted that weather modification is an accepted practice
- Need clarifications:
 - What are the water sources for storage alternatives?
 - Why was Squirrel Creek left off the storage list?
 - Need to clarify description of conservation alternatives to show that it includes evaluation of recharge, demand reduction, and conservation.

Agency

- Generally agreed with carried forward alternatives
- Need to include impacts on flows to lower streams/receiving waters in analysis
- Need to start letting affected landowners in the process
- Need implementable Water Market alternative
 - Consider combining alts #34 (Credit Systems) & #35 (Utilize and/ or Expand Existing Banking)
- Need implementable FMID Optimization alternative
- Alternative notes:
 - Identify wild and scenic designations for Lane Lake alternative for the source and receiving waters (Bitch Creek is federal eligible).
 - Identify wild and scenic designations for Canyon Creek alternative for the source and receiving waters.
 - May be more value in Generic Flatland Reservoir as a recharge project vs. surface storage
 - Need to identify a site (below NF/SF confluence, below NF/ Teton confluence, downstream of Rexburg)
 - Need to review the Upper Badger Creek/Squirrel Meadows land exchange (may be federal limitations for development)
- Need clarifications:
 - Is Moose Creek a pump storage project?
 - Teton Dam – clarification on cost estimate/indexing appropriate for reconnaissance analysis
 - Egin Lake expansion – expanding lake area or expanding delivery/conveyance system?

Citizen

- Rob Van Kirk's model should be a tool, not an alternative
- Where might fish passage improvements and other concerns fit into the study of alternatives, e.g., fish screens, increasing instream flows in tributaries, etc.?
- Alternative notes:
 - Consider including enlarging the CCC as a stand-alone alternative
 - Carry forward Moody Creek as a standalone alternative
 - Why is #36 [Economic Valuation of Water] in the absence of #34 [Credit Systems] and #35 [Utilize and/ or Expand Existing Banking]. Consider dropping the footnote; Use as a tool not an alternative, as with the VanKirk Model.
 - Need to analyze the environmental impacts of Lane Lake. Possibly analyze two or three Lane Lake options with different water source(s): filled by Teton or Bitch Creek (impacts may be currently understated), filled by Fall River (fewer environmental impacts), filled by Teton River alone unless high water in Bitch Creek.
 - Upper Badger Creek - the associated negative impacts are not overcome by the need for upper valley storage
 - Possible need to study environmental impact of FELT dam (private). This would be for knowledge's sake to achieve broader info (viable approach, given WaterSMART objectives).
- Need clarifications:
 - Why was Marysville Headworks dropped? How does the new plan (to pipe additional canals, other infrastructure work) affect overall water delivery?

- Needs Assessment - can we have environmental alternatives/opportunities that could be included with any of the alternatives (e.g., Felt Dam removal)
- Clarify Alts #45 & #46 (DCM&I; FMID Optimization)
- Keeping Teton on the table is just to use it as a benchmark

Upcoming Meetings and Agenda

Mr. Schattin closed the meeting and clarified that Reclamation intends to finalize the list of carried forward alternatives after the July 28 IWRB meeting. Following the IWRB meeting, the final list of alternatives will be distributed to the Workgroup along with the scope of work for alternatives analysis to clarify the level of reconnaissance-level analysis.

The next meeting – Meeting 8 – scheduled for Tuesday, October 25, 2011 (*post meeting update*) will present the findings of the Draft Interim Report. Other upcoming meetings include a presentation of Dr. Van Kirk's modeling work on July 19 and the Summer Tour (FMID facilities) on August 9.